



California Architects Board

Architectural Educators & Practitioners Workshop

Summary Report

INTRODUCTION

On October 19, 2002 the California Architects Board (CAB) gathered architectural educators and practitioners for a workshop entitled “The Art of Building: Putting Practice into Education” at Woodbury University in Burbank, California. There were approximately 30 workshop participants, which were comprised of CAB Board members, educators and students from various colleges and universities, and practicing architects from the state. Among CAB Board members in attendance were Kirk Miller, CAB Board President, Gordon Carrier, CAB Vice President, and Denis Henmi. Architectural educators and students in attendance were from the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley), the University of Southern California (USC), Woodbury University, California Polytechnic State University of San Luis Obispo, California State Polytechnic University of Pomona, New School University, California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC), and Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCIARC). Daniel Iacofano, of Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc., (MIG), facilitated the workshop.

The primary purpose of this workshop was to solicit perspectives from educators and practitioners regarding the integration of practice and education. Results of this workshop may be summarized and presented at the 2003 National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB) Validation Conference.

About this Report:

This summary is organized according to the presentations and discussions, which took place during the meeting:

- I. Values, Issues, and Challenges in Architectural Education
- II. Emerging Themes and Potential Actions
- III. NAAB Criteria

I. VALUES, ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

Workshop participants identified values in integrating practice into architectural education. Then the group listed major issues and challenges for preparing architectural students to become practitioners. Those comments are outlined below:

Values

- Fostering a passion for learning
- Putting “studio-like” education back into general architectural education
- Learning by doing
- Teaching students “how to think” critically
- Trusting in the students’ capabilities
- Understanding that in “practice” everything happens simultaneously
- Knowing what we want to achieve in regards to how architectural students:
 - Think
 - Write
 - Calculate
 - Draw
 - Understand
 - Design
- Working together to expand our leadership role in both schools and firms

Issues and Challenges

- Understanding the importance of construction contract administration and “how a building comes together”
- Integrating design with learning and understanding appropriate codes
- Assessing continued segmentation of design production due to global economic and technological forces
 - Design production is being exported
- Demonstrating the importance of and fostering sensitivity and desirability for learning the codes
- Differentiating and assessing skill sets needed for small firms as compared to large firms
- Learning how to lead and manage
- Focusing on problem-solving
- Learning to value all aspects of architecture
 - Studio culture tends to reinforce certain values over others... are we satisfied with this?
- Preparing all young people adequately
 - People of color are at a major disadvantage when entering the profession
- Systematically adding and backfilling each individuals’ needs due to inadequate high school preparation
 - The education “backlog”
- Addressing the changing role of architects in practice
- Working with a variety of project delivery methods

II. EMERGING THEMES AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS

Several “themes” emerged from the discussion on issues and challenges, which in turn, were reviewed and validated by the group. These themes and potential follow-up actions are outlined below.

Emerging Themes

- A. Agree to collaborate (“finger-pointing” is not productive)
- B. Develop a common agenda for addressing specific problems in the preparation of architects including such items as:
 - Codes
 - International practice
 - Studio culture
 - Critical thinking
 - Delivery systems
 - How a building goes together
 - Post Occupancy Evaluations
 - Humanist education
 - Backfilling general education
 - Constant reinforcement
 - Common goals and evaluation criteria e.g., International Organization for Standardization ISO 9000
 - Reinforcement of core competencies
- C. Explore feasibility of specific projects—responding to the future
 - Case studies
 - Databases
 - Leadership development
 - Professional practice academy
 - Research agenda
- D. Improve communication through:
 - Exchanges and sabbaticals
 - Profiles of practices, schools, and studios
 - Profiles of firms
 - The roles of schools, American Institute of Architects and CAB
- E. Support and advocate for the needs of schools and academia
- F. Take a leadership position on “the art of building”
- G. Change the culture of how we do everyday things!
 - Teach construction with every studio
 - Work with building teams

- Use full-scale mock-ups
- Support through culture and leadership

H. Provide feedback on the NAAB process including policies, procedures, and systems

I. Emphasize teaching and learning all aspects of “production of the building”

- CM
- Facilities
- Finance
- Legal
- Urban design
- Strategy
- At the core is architecture

Potential Actions

1. Form a committee of nine (9) members including both educators and practitioners to prioritize and move on the above items
2. Construct a research agenda
3. Develop case studies on “The Art of Building”
4. Conduct an annual survey of graduates
5. Collect and organize existing data on architectural schools and firms
6. Reconvene the Architectural Educators/Practitioners Workshop to continue dialogue and move the agenda forward

III. NAAB CRITERIA

The group reviewed and discussed the NAAB Student Performance Criteria. The comments are organized into three (3) sections: 1) development of textual strategies or potential changes specific to NAAB Student Performance Criteria document and/or text, 2) general comments or questions about NAAB Student Performance Criteria text that need to be considered and/or addressed when preparing the potential CAB position paper, and 3) development of follow-up actions that may improve the NAAB accreditation process. The discussion is outlined below.

A. Potential Changes to NAAB Student Performance Criteria Document

1. Add more focus on project management
2. Participants felt the wording needed to be clearer in sections:
 - 12.28 Technical Documentation
 - 12.22 Building Systems
3. Sections: 12.27,12.28,12.29 of the document implies at least one studio on full set of drawings
4. Add a section on environmental energy
5. NAAB Criteria should collaborative interests and feedback from schools, firms, and CAB
6. Sections 1-6 should ascertain students' learning foundation
7. Sections 6-37 should ascertain students' architectural body of knowledge
8. Ensure document includes:
 - School philosophy, mission, vision, etc.
 - Compare with vision of profession

B. General Comments, Strategies and Questions

1. Do we test for minimal standards?
2. Do we teach for the exam?
3. We lack ability to test “synthetic” criteria
4. Emphasize verbal and writing skills illustrated in section 12.1 Verbal and Writing Skills
5. Ensure that criteria had everything an architect needs to know
6. Look at other accreditation process issues, such as member selection (inherent structural difficulties and training/orientation)

C. Suggestions for Improving the NAAB Accreditation Process

1. Make accreditation process more transparent
2. Publish the schedule of NAAB visits
3. Encourage teachers and educators to experience practice and encourage practitioners to experience education
4. Standardize NAAB team training sessions for accreditation teams
5. Encourage participation of representatives of large and small firms